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Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Rationale and Ethos

At Oxford Spires Academy, we define relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) as the structured teaching of knowledge, skills, and values that enable students to develop healthy, respectful relationships, make informed decisions, and understand their physical and emotional development. We believe RSHE is vital for our students as it empowers them to thrive as individuals and members of a diverse community.

We are committed to delivering RSHE that is inclusive, evidence-based, and reflective of the challenges and opportunities faced by young people today. The overarching principles of our school in respect of RSHE are rooted in the Anthem Trust values of integrity, collaboration, and excellence. These values guide our approach, ensuring RSHE is delivered with care, sensitivity, and respect for all students, regardless of background, identity, or experience.

In our local context, we recognise the importance of addressing mental health, online safety, and the influence of social media, as well as local indicators around teenage wellbeing and relationship education. Our curriculum responds to these needs, ensuring students are supported to lead safe, healthy lives both now and in the future.

The intended outcomes of our curriculum are that students will:

- Know and understand the physical and emotional aspects of growing up, relationships, and sexual health.
- Understand they have a right to safety, respect, and support.
- Understand they have a responsibility to treat others with kindness, empathy, and consent.
- Develop the skills of communication, decision-making, and self-awareness.
- Develop the attributes of confidence, respect, and resilience.

We view the partnership between home and school as essential to delivering effective RSHE. Parents and carers are key stakeholders, and we aim to create an open, respectful dialogue about the curriculum. The voice of the student is reflected in the content by incorporating feedback, ensuring lessons are relevant, engaging, and responsive to students' lived experiences.

Aims

The aims of relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of students at the school and of society.

- Prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.
- Provide knowledge and information which is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students including those with protected characteristics.
- Create a positive culture around issues of self-esteem and confidence, relationships and sexuality ensuring gender and LGBT+ equality.
- Help students develop and understand their feelings, behaviours, and emotions and also those of others so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives.
- Provide students with the right tools to enable them to seek information and support (both within and outside school) should they need it.
- Help students to develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness), promoting ambition and aspiration to make the most of their abilities whilst coping with the influences of their peers and the media.
- Recognise and respect themselves and others, the views of others, backgrounds, cultures, values, and experiences.
- Develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle to allow students to respect and care for their bodies and be prepared for changes through puberty and adulthood.
- Teach sex education as part of a wider social, personal, and moral education.
- Ensure all students recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy relationships, including mutual respect, consent, loyalty, and trust.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Ensure that students have knowledge about safer sex and sexual health to ensure that they are equipped to make safe, informed, and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, governors, students, and parents/carers and has been approved by the Executive Education Team.

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there is a need to respond to any amendments made to the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education.

Staff, governors, students, and parents/carers will be consulted every time the policy is reviewed and will be invited to share feedback which will be led by the Lead Practitioner of Personal Development. All feedback will be considered and will help to inform future revisions to the policy and curriculum.

Statutory Requirements

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all students a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

As a secondary academy school, we must provide relationship education to all students as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). and relationships, sex, and health education in line with the [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education DfE Statutory Guidance](#) (Updated 2025).

In teaching RSHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Legislation and supporting guidance.

We used the following legislation and guidance to inform the development of this policy. Click on the hyperlink below to view the document.

- [Education Act 1996](#)
- [Learning and Skills Act \(2000\)](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 years \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools \(advice for Schools\)](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying\)](#)
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools](#)

Cross-reference can be made to other Anthem policies to avoid any unnecessary repetition.

These include but are not exclusive of:

- PSHE and Citizenship
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Anti-bullying
- Drug and Alcohol

Roles and Responsibilities

The Education Executive Team – will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Trustees – Ultimately have responsibility for the policy.

The Headteacher - is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from (non-statutory/non-science) components of RSHE. (See right to withdraw).

Lead Practitioner of Personal Development is responsible for the planning and delivery of the RSHE curriculum.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum
- Reporting progress to parents
- Responding to the needs of individual students

Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSHE by notifying them when sex education is going to be taught and providing alternative lessons for the student where necessary.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher or Lead Practitioner of Personal Development. All tutors and teachers are responsible for teaching RSHE at Oxford Spires Academy and can contact the Lead Practitioner of Personal Development or Headteacher if they wish to discuss the policy in more detail.

Students are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. The Lead Practitioner of Personal Development is responsible for providing ongoing training for teachers who deliver RSHE and this occurs one a year prior to the delivery of RSHE,

Curriculum

RSHE is taught within the Character Education curriculum during tutor time. Key learning is also addressed through cross-curricular links in other subjects e.g IT, Science, RS, assemblies, visiting performances and the underlying SMSC values that are embedded across our school curriculum. Teachers will deliver the RSHE curriculum in a way that allows students to explore varying viewpoints by ensuring that information is unbiased and impartial. The curriculum is designed to engage students to think deeply about RSHE and be empowered with knowledge for informed decision-making.

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1. Following student voice taken in June 2024, sex education is taught in same sex groups led by a same sex teacher. To ensure that the curriculum is taught in a safe space for every student there is an additional mixed-sex group which students can discreetly opt-into. The curriculum is also informed by conversations with the Designated Safeguarding Lead

(DSL) to ensure any emerging trends or concerns are addressed in RSHE lessons. This will be reviewed every two years; amendments may be made following feedback from staff, governors, parents/carers, and students or due to changes in statutory guidance.

Our curriculum covers all objectives within the DfE statutory guidance for relationships and health education. The DfE statutory guidance document can be viewed here: [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education DfE Statutory Guidance](#) (Updated September 2021).

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships.
- Online and media.
- Being safe.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

We have carefully planned our curriculum to meet the needs of students in our school. We will regularly review and make adaptations to the curriculum to ensure we continue to meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of our students, or in response to local or global events. You will notice that our RSHE curriculum is a spiral curriculum (key concepts are revisited throughout the curriculum with deepening layers of complexity as students move through the school). We have purposefully designed our RSHE curriculum in this way so that our students can embed their learning of the most important aspects of the curriculum and have dedicated time to practice key skills linked to these very important key concepts. We involve students in their learning by using active learning methods and these include role play, scenarios, discussions, debates and problem-solving.

Inclusivity and Equality

All schools have a duty under the Equality Act (2010) to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of their protected characteristic which includes: age, gender, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage, and civil partnership.

The DfE guidance states *that “at the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson.”*

At Oxford Spires Academy, we are fully committed to promoting inclusion and embracing the diversity of the society in which our students live. In line with the DfE guidance, LGBT content is not treated as a separate or standalone topic but is thoughtfully and respectfully embedded throughout our RSHE curriculum and wider school life. Teaching about different types of relationships and families—including those with same-sex parents or LGBT members—is seamlessly integrated across topics such as identity, respect, equality, and healthy relationships.

Our inclusive approach is also reflected across the wider curriculum. In English, for example, students explore diverse texts and authors that reflect a range of identities and experiences. In subjects like PSHE, Citizenship, and Religious Studies, students are encouraged to reflect on themes of belonging, human rights, and respect for difference. This helps to reinforce key messages of tolerance and acceptance throughout their learning journey.

Oxford Spires Academy is proud to celebrate the richness of all family structures, backgrounds, and identities. We actively promote a school culture where every student feels safe, seen, and valued. Through assemblies, tutor time discussions, student leadership opportunities, and staff training, our commitment to inclusivity is woven into the everyday ethos of our school. We aim to equip students not only with knowledge, but with empathy, understanding, and a strong sense of social responsibility.

Every student can see themselves reflected in the curriculum content, the resources, and the school environment. We work hard to ensure that all families in our school community feel valued and diversity is celebrated.

The RSHE curriculum and resources may be adapted and differentiated to meet the specific needs of students with special educational needs (SEND) and learning may be scaffolded to ensure all lessons are inclusive. Teachers will seek specialist advice from the SENCO when required. This could include pre-teaching of key concepts or vocabulary, follow-up individual/group work after the weekly lesson has taken place or a bespoke delivery of the curriculum tailored to the learning needs of the students. Teachers, with support from the SENCO, will consider whether it is appropriate for targets linked to the RSHE curriculum to be included within students' Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs).

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Teachers create a safe learning environment by providing clear boundaries, using agreed terminology, and fostering a respectful and inclusive classroom culture where all students feel valued. They use consistent routines to encourage active listening and positive participation, while ensuring that no personal disclosures are required.

Teachers will establish ground rules with students at the beginning of each RSHE unit, co-creating them together to promote ownership and understanding. These ground rules will be referred to regularly throughout lessons and revisited when necessary, especially before discussions that may include sensitive content. To ensure inclusivity, teachers will differentiate communication methods, use visual prompts where appropriate, and check understanding with students with SEND to ensure all learners are supported in accessing and contributing to the discussions safely.

Potentially sensitive issues will be dealt with by providing factual, age-appropriate, and curriculum-relevant responses that align with school values and safeguarding policies. If a student asks a question that a teacher feels unsure about or is uncomfortable answering, the teacher will acknowledge the importance of the question and inform the student that they will return to it later. In these cases, the teacher will refer the question to the RSHE lead, who will ensure that the student receives a timely,

accurate response. This approach ensures no student is left without an answer or guidance and avoids the risk of them seeking unreliable or harmful information elsewhere.

Teachers will use distancing techniques; these may include drama, roleplay, scenarios and use of video clips. Distancing techniques put a space between a difficult subject and an individual student so that the question does not become, ‘what do you think?’ but ‘what might they think?’ instead. It enables tricky questions to be answered and supports students to debate and disagree without anyone feeling personally compromised.

All staff teaching RSHE know that they can access support from the Lead Practitioner of Personal Development, SENCO and Safeguarding Lead if they are faced with difficult questions from students, upcoming topics that may be triggering for some students, questions about how to ensure lessons are fully inclusive or following a safeguarding disclosure.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are aware of the school safeguarding procedures; and this procedure will be followed in the case of a student making a disclosure or any member of staff/school visitor raising any concerns about student welfare.

Teachers delivering RSHE regularly check with the Safeguarding Lead whether there are any students in the class that are more vulnerable, or likely to be more affected by the lesson content. The Safeguarding Lead may give the teacher advice or provide additional support to the student as appropriate. This may include a student accessing the lesson content on a 1:1 rather than whole-class basis.

Any visitors delivering RSHE will be made aware of the safeguarding procedures and are expected to report any concerns to the appropriate member of staff.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSHE will be required to ensure that any speakers, tools, and resources used comply with this policy.

We will ensure that we only work with visitors/external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency/visitor, its approach and the resources used.

We will ensure:

- We are clear about what the visitors/agency are going to say.
- We are clear on their position on issues to be discussed.
- All resources to be used within the session have been checked and agreed by the RSHE Lead

We will:

- Ensure that a teacher remains in the session with the visitor/agency at all times
- Remind teachers that it is their responsibility to stop a session if any element of the session does not meet with the school RSHE policy.

Parents and Carers

We recognise the importance of working in close partnership with parents/carers to deliver safe and effective relationships, sex and health education. Parents/carers were consulted during the development of this policy.

The policy is available via the website and is available to parents on request.

To gain clarification and further understanding on the content of certain topics, parents/carers may request to view resources or discuss matters further with Nicola Har, Lead Practitioner of Personal Development.

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships or health education. There are elements of sex education included within the statutory Science Curriculum. Parents/Carers **do not** have the right to withdraw their children from the statutory elements of the science curriculum related to sex education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSHE.

A parent or carer can withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Requests for withdrawal should in the first instance be directed to the Headteacher. An informal meeting will be set up to discuss parent/carer concerns. In the instance of a parent/carer deciding to withdraw their child from sex education, advice will be offered to support parents/carers to enable them to have positive conversations about sex education at home when they feel the time is right. An alternative plan for the student's time when the teacher is delivering sex education will also be agreed. This may include alternative work being given to a student to complete during this time or temporarily joining and taking part in learning within a different class group. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a *Request to Withdraw* form which will be held on the student's file to ensure all teachers know that the student does not take part in sex education lessons unless the form is removed at a later date, with parent/carer permission.

To request withdrawal from sex education, please complete this MS Form: [Parent Request to withdraw from Sex Education – Fill in form](#)

Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance.
- Are aligned with our school ethos and values.
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings.
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students.

- Reflect diversity to include the 9 protected characteristics.
- Are unbiased and balanced in their presentation.
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics.
- Fit into our curriculum plan.
- Are from credible sources.
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches.
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress.
- Resources and lesson plans are adapted and differentiated for students with SEND.
- Resources are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they are current.

All teaching resources must be agreed by the RSHE Lead. Parents/carers may request to see teaching resources.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Assessment for Learning

- The delivery of RSHE in our school is monitored by class teachers and the Lead Practitioner of Personal Development as part of our internal assessment systems through the end of cycle assessment and staff feedback.
- A range of assessment activities will be used, and these will include in-class formative assessment such as exit tickets, mini-whiteboards, and class discussion. Assessment of student learning includes formative and summative assessment; this assessment will inform future curriculum planning and delivery.
- Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning through regular plenaries, structured self-assessment activities, group discussions, and end-of-unit reflection tasks. These opportunities allow students to consolidate their understanding, ask follow-up questions, and connect learning to real-life contexts.
- Student voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities through ongoing feedback collected via student voice and informal classroom check-ins. This feedback will be reviewed by the RSHE lead and teaching staff to ensure that the curriculum remains responsive, relevant, and inclusive of the lived experiences and concerns of our students.
- Teachers will ensure that the learning objectives have been met **by** using a range of formative assessment techniques, including questioning, class discussions, exit tickets, and reflective tasks. Progress will also be monitored through students' ability to apply key concepts in scenario-based learning and to articulate their understanding confidently and appropriately.
- Parents will be notified of progress by the end of cycle reports communicated home. In addition, opportunities will be provided at parents' evenings and via the school website or learning platforms to access curriculum overviews and key messages, ensuring that families are kept informed and engaged with their child's learning journey.

Review

- This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every two years unless statutory changes, or feedback from consultation suggests otherwise. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Education Executive Team



Appendix 1: Oxford Spires Academy RSHE Curriculum	
Intent	At Oxford Spires Academy, we are committed to providing a comprehensive, inclusive, and age-appropriate Relationships Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum for students from Year 7 to Year 13. Our intent is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to lead healthy, safe, and fulfilling lives.
Implementation	<p>We implement this by teaching sex education in same-sex groups and delivered by a same-sex teachers. This helps to support a safer space for students as the physical aspects and changes with their bodies are discussed. This gives students space to ask questions without the pressure of the opposite sex and this decision has been informed by student voice.</p> <p>To ensure inclusivity, students can opt-in to the inclusivity group. They can do this by completing an MS Form to ensure anonymity from their peers. During the delivery of RSE, students will go straight to inclusivity room which protects them from identifying in front of other peers. The inclusivity group enables a smaller space that any student is welcome to attend. It is not defined by gender or sex.</p> <p>As there is a shortage of male teachers able to deliver RSE, we have a group of male teachers who can be subbed in to deliver this: CRG, DMI, SWY, WON</p> <p>Relationships Education is statutory, and parents cannot withdraw their children. Relationships and Health education will be delivered in usual tutor groups not same-sex groups.</p> <p>All students receive the same content of RSE regardless of the group they are in. The content has been identified as essential knowledge for all students.</p>
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge questions on the end of cycle assessments will test knowledge retention. • Student Voice: Focus groups will provide deeper insights into students' experiences and areas for improvement. • Staff Voice: Staff survey sent out to gain insight into what went well in the delivery and how to improve.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent Voice: Engaging with parents to understand their perspectives on the curriculum's impact and areas for improvement.• CPOMS Data: Monitoring the number of reported incidents related to relationships and sexual health, such as bullying, harassment, or unsafe behaviours, as a measure of the curriculum's effectiveness in promoting respectful and safe behaviour.• Pastoral care teams will track referrals and incidents related to relationship and sexual health issues. |
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This form should be completed by a parent/carer if, following a discussion with the headteacher, they wish to withdraw their child from the non-statutory sex-education element of RSHE.

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form - withdrawal from sex education within RSHE

To be completed by parents/carers			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent/carer signature			

To be completed by the school	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	<p><i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.</i></p> <p><i>e.g. Joe Bloggs will be taking part in all relationships lessons and during the sex education lessons, he will be working independently on a project in the Year 5 classroom.</i></p>

Year 7 Relationships and Sex Education

Week	I will need to know:
Positive relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A positive relationship is one where people treat each other with kindness, respect, and support, helping each other feel safe and valued. These relationships help us grow, feel confident, and enjoy being around others. Relationships can be with family, friends, teachers, classmates, and even people in our community. Each type of relationship has different roles and expectations, but all should be based on trust and respect. Family relationships change as people grow older, become more independent, and learn to understand each other in new ways. Families also change through events like birth, death, separation, and new relationships, which can affect how people feel and interact with each other.
Consent and peer pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good communication means listening, speaking clearly, and respecting others' feelings and choices. Consent means giving permission using FRIES: it must be Freely given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, and Specific—you should never feel pressured, and you can always change your mind. Peer pressure can make someone feel forced to do things they're not comfortable with, just to fit in or be liked. This can lead to risky choices, like breaking rules or harming their health or wellbeing.
Respectful and safe behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectful behaviour means treating others with kindness, listening to their opinions, and accepting differences without being rude or hurtful. It also means following rules, using polite language, and thinking about how your actions affect others. A relationship might be unsafe if someone makes you feel scared, pressured, controlled, or disrespected. If you feel unhappy, frightened, or unable to say no, it's important to talk to a trusted adult and get help.
Sex Education: Puberty Average periods FGM 19 th Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During puberty, your body starts to grow and change as you move from childhood to adulthood. Girls usually start puberty between ages 8 and 13. Their bodies begin to develop breasts, grow pubic and underarm hair, and start having periods as the ovaries release hormones. They may also notice changes in mood, skin (like acne), and body shape, especially around the hips. Boys usually start puberty between ages 9 and 14. Their voices begin to deepen, they grow facial, pubic, and body hair, and their testicles and penis grow as the body starts producing sperm. They may also experience growth spurts, acne, and changes in mood or emotions. An average period is part of the menstrual cycle and usually lasts between 3 to 7 days, happening about once a month. The menstrual cycle is the time from the first day of one period to the day before the next, and while the average cycle is around 28 days, anything from 21 to 35 days is normal. Girls can start their periods anywhere from age 8 upwards, but the average starting age is around 12. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting, and by other terms, such as Sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It's illegal in the UK and is child abuse. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.
Sex Education Human reproduction Hygiene 27 th Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humans reproduce when a sperm cell from a male joins with an egg cell from a female during fertilisation. This usually happens through sexual intercourse, and if the egg is fertilised, it can grow into a baby inside the uterus. Reproduction is a natural part of life and is how humans create new life. To stay clean and healthy, it's important to wash your body regularly, especially your hands, face, and underarms. You should also brush your teeth twice a day, wear clean clothes, and use deodorant during puberty. Good hygiene helps prevent illness and keeps you feeling fresh and confident.

Year 8 Relationships and Sex Education

Week	I will need to know:
Puberty and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During puberty, your brain develops and your hormones change, which can make your emotions feel stronger or more unpredictable. You might feel happy one moment and upset the next, and that's completely normal. These emotional changes help you grow into an adult and learn more about yourself and others. • Mental health affects how we think, feel, and behave, which can influence how we connect with others. If someone is feeling anxious, stressed, or low, it might be harder to communicate or trust others. Looking after your mental health helps you build stronger, more respectful relationships.
Gender norms and marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender norms are ideas and expectations about how people should behave based on whether they are male or female. These can include things like what clothes to wear, how to act, or what jobs people should do. It's important to know that everyone should be free to be themselves, no matter their gender. • Marriage is a legal and emotional partnership between two people who choose to commit to each other. In the UK, people can marry through a civil ceremony (at a register office or licensed venue), a religious ceremony (in a place of worship), or enter into a civil partnership, which gives similar legal rights without a traditional wedding. You must be 18 or over, not already married or closely related, and both people must agree freely and willingly.
Mutual respect and body image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual respect means treating each other fairly, listening to different opinions, and valuing each person's boundaries and choices. It links to consent because respecting someone means never pressuring them into doing something they don't want to do. Consent must always be given freely, and mutual respect helps create safe, trusting relationships. • The media often shows edited or filtered images that don't reflect real bodies, making it seem like everyone should look perfect or fit a certain ideal. This can lower self-esteem, especially if someone feels they don't match those unrealistic standards. Learning to recognise these portrayals helps you appreciate your own body and build confidence in who you are. Girls may feel pressure to be thin, flawless, or look like influencers and celebrities, which can lead to anxiety, low self-worth, or unhealthy habits. Boys may feel they need to be muscular, tall, or "tough," which can also affect confidence and lead to body image issues. Both can feel judged or not good enough, so it's important to challenge these messages and celebrate real, diverse bodies.
Sex Education: Puberty Pregnancy 19th Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During puberty, your body goes through changes like growing taller, developing body hair, and changes in your skin and voice. Girls may start their periods and develop breasts, while boys may notice their voice deepening and muscle growth. These changes happen at different times for everyone and are a normal part of growing up. • Pregnancy begins when a sperm fertilises an egg, and the fertilised egg grows into a baby inside the uterus. It lasts about nine months and is divided into three trimesters, each with different changes and check-ups. During pregnancy, a woman's body goes through many changes, including weight gain, tiredness, and emotional shifts, and she will need regular medical care to stay healthy. • In the UK, pregnancy care is called antenatal care, and it includes regular appointments with a midwife or doctor to check the health of both the mother and baby. Women usually have a booking appointment between 8–12 weeks, followed by scans at around 12 weeks (dating scan) and 20 weeks (anomaly scan) to check the baby's development. Blood pressure, urine tests, and blood tests are also done to check for conditions like anaemia or infections. These appointments help spot any problems early and give advice on diet, exercise, and preparing for birth.
Sex Education Human reproduction Hygiene 27th Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childbirth is the process where a baby is born after growing inside the uterus for about 40 weeks. During labour, the uterus contracts and the cervix opens so the baby can pass through the vagina. Babies can be born via vaginal birth, assisted vaginal birth or caesarean section. • Sexuality is about who you're emotionally, romantically, or physically attracted to—it's a natural part of who you are. It includes feelings, relationships, and identity, and can be different for everyone. Heterosexual – A person who is attracted to people of the opposite gender (e.g. a girl who likes boys). Homosexual – A person who is attracted to people of the same gender (e.g. a boy who likes boys). Bisexual – A person who is attracted to both boys and girls. Asexual – A person who doesn't experience sexual attraction to others, though they may still have emotional or romantic relationships. • Gender reassignment is when someone chooses to live as a different gender to the sex they were assigned at birth. This might involve changing their name, clothes, or pronouns, and sometimes medical treatment, but not always

Year 9 Relationships and Sex Education

Week	I will need to know:
<p>Forced marriage Parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced marriage is when someone is made to marry without their full and free consent—this can involve threats, pressure, or abuse. It is different from an arranged marriage, where both people agree freely, and forced marriage is illegal in the UK. Honour-based abuse is when someone is hurt or controlled by family or community members to protect what they see as their reputation or honour, often because the person has acted in a way they consider shameful • Parents are expected to provide a safe, loving, and supportive environment for their child to grow and learn. This includes meeting their child's physical needs (like food, clothing, and shelter), emotional needs (like love and encouragement), and helping them learn right from wrong. Good parenting also means being a role model, setting boundaries, and helping children feel secure and confident
<p>Consent and the rule of law Sexual harassment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent means giving permission freely and confidently, without pressure, and it applies to many situations—not just sexual ones. You need consent in friendships, physical activities, sharing personal information, and online interactions. In all cases, consent must be freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and specific (FRIES). Kindness and care mean thinking about how your actions affect others, not just whether you've got permission. A respectful relationship involves empathy, trust, and making sure both people feel safe and valued. Consent is the legal and ethical minimum—kindness goes further by showing you truly care about someone's wellbeing. • The rule of law means everyone must follow the same laws, and no one is above them—including in relationships. Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes someone feel uncomfortable, scared, or unsafe, and it can be verbal, physical, or online. It is illegal in the UK, and schools must take it seriously—reporting it is important to protect yourself and others.
<p>Coercion control and domestic abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coercion is when someone pressures or manipulates another person into doing something they don't want to do. Control in relationships can mean stopping someone from seeing friends, making choices, or feeling free—this is often subtle and builds over time. Abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual, or financial harm, and it's never okay—healthy relationships are based on respect, not fear or control. • Domestic abuse happens when someone hurts, bullies, or controls a person they are in a relationship with, including partners or family members. It can include physical violence, emotional manipulation, sexual abuse, or financial control, and it often happens repeatedly. Domestic abuse is illegal, and anyone experiencing it should speak to a trusted adult or contact support services for help
<p>Sex Education: Honour-based abuse and explicit images 19th Dec</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misogyny is the hatred or unfair treatment of women and girls, often shown through harmful stereotypes, disrespect, or violence. There are online communities that promote sexist and anti-women beliefs, sometimes targeting boys with misleading messages about gender roles and relationships. These ideas can affect how young people think and behave, so it's important to challenge them and learn about respectful, equal relationships. • Virgin-testing is a harmful and illegal practice where someone checks a girl's body to see if she has had sex, even though there's no medical way to prove this. Hymenoplasty is surgery to recreate the hymen, often done to make it seem like a girl hasn't had sex—this is also illegal in the UK. Both are linked to honour-based abuse, where girls are pressured or forced to meet unfair expectations about purity and behaviour. • It is a crime to keep, share, or forward indecent or sexual images of anyone under 18, even if the person in the image gave consent or created it themselves—including AI-generated images. This can lead to serious consequences, including criminal charges and even imprisonment. If an image of you has been shared, you should ask for help—you will not be in trouble for speaking to a trusted adult, teacher, or the police. Sharing indecent images of adults without their consent is also a crime and can cause serious harm.
<p>Sex Education STIs 27th Mar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STIs are infections that spread through sexual contact, including vaginal, oral, or anal sex. Common STIs include chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes, HIV, and syphilis, and they can affect anyone who is sexually active. Many STIs can be prevented by using condoms and treated with medicine, but some may cause serious health problems if left untreated. • Drugs and alcohol affect how your brain works, which can lead to poor decision-making and risky behaviour. They can lower your ability to think clearly, increase impulsiveness, and make it harder to say no or recognise danger. This can lead to unsafe sex, accidents, arguments, or getting involved in things like crime or peer pressure

Week	I will need to know:
<p>Red flags and consent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red flags are warning signs that a relationship might be unhealthy. These can include: Controlling behaviour (e.g. telling you who you can talk to or what to wear) Disrespect (e.g. mocking your opinions or ignoring your boundaries) Jealousy (e.g. accusing you of things without reason) Not listening to your boundaries (e.g. pushing you to do things you're uncomfortable with) If you notice these signs, it's important to talk to someone you trust and consider whether the relationship is safe and respectful. • Consent means agreeing to something freely, confidently, and without pressure. Think of it like ordering a meal—you wouldn't want someone to choose for you or force you to eat something you didn't want. And just like a meal isn't complete without fries, consent isn't complete unless it's: Freely given – no pressure, no manipulation. Reversible – you can change your mind at any time. Informed – you know what you're agreeing to. Enthusiastic – you <i>want</i> to say yes. Specific – saying yes to one thing doesn't mean yes to everything. • Making responsible decisions in a relationship means knowing your boundaries and values, and making choices that keep you safe and respected. It's important to communicate openly, listen to your partner, and never feel pressured into anything. If you're unsure, take time to reflect or talk to a trusted adult for support.
<p>Consent and the rule of law, power imbalance and emotional readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rule of law teaches that consent must be freely given, informed, and made by someone with the capacity to choose—meaning they understand what's happening and aren't being pressured or manipulated. In the UK, the law says that any sexual activity without consent is illegal, and it's the responsibility of the person seeking consent to make sure it's real and ongoing. Consent can't be given by someone who is underage, asleep, intoxicated, or afraid to say no • Power imbalance happens when one person has more control or influence than the other, which can lead to unfair decision-making, emotional pressure, or feeling unheard. It can show up in different ways—like one partner controlling money, making all the decisions, or using emotional tactics to get their way. Healthy relationships need mutual respect and shared power, so both people feel safe, valued, and equal. • Emotional readiness means being mentally and emotionally prepared to handle the ups and downs of a relationship. It includes knowing who you are, being able to communicate your feelings, and having the maturity to respect someone else's emotions and boundaries. If you're emotionally ready, you can build a relationship based on trust, empathy, and healthy communication.
<p>Coercion and sexting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse, control, and coercion can be hard to spot, but warning signs include someone: Isolating you from friends or family, Monitoring your actions, like checking your phone or controlling where you go, Putting you down, making you feel worthless or scared, Making threats, using guilt or fear to get their way. Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour that makes someone feel trapped, dependent, or afraid to say no. It's illegal in the UK and can happen without physical violence—through emotional manipulation, threats, or controlling your choices. • Sexting—sending sexual images or messages—can be risky because once an image is shared, you lose control over where it goes and who sees it. It's illegal to create, share, or possess sexual images of anyone under 18, even if it's of yourself, and this law is meant to protect young people from harm. Sexting can lead to bullying, blackmail, and emotional distress, so it's important to know you can say no and talk to a trusted adult if you feel pressured or unsafe.
<p>Sex Education: Pornography, AI, sextortion 19th Dec</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation is about who you feel attracted to, whether that is romantic, emotional, or physical. It is a natural part of who you are, and there is no right or wrong orientation. It can take time to understand and sometimes feelings change over time. • Heterosexual means being attracted to the opposite gender. Homosexual means being attracted to the same gender. Bisexual means being attracted to both genders. Pansexual means being attracted to people of any gender, including non-binary. Asexual means not feeling sexual attraction to anyone. Queer is a broad term for people who do not fit traditional labels. • At school, we teach that sexual orientation is a protected characteristic under the law. Everyone deserves respect, and derogatory language is never acceptable. Relationship issues like trust, contraception, and abuse can happen in any relationship, no matter your sexuality. Pornography can give a distorted view of sex and relationships, often showing unrealistic, aggressive, or disrespectful behaviour—especially towards women. It can affect how young people think about consent, body image, and what's normal in relationships, leading to confusion or pressure. Watching pornography at a young age can also increase the risk of harmful sexual behaviour and emotional distress. • Some people misuse AI chatbots by programming or prompting them to simulate sexual conversations or behaviours, which can be misleading, unsafe, and emotionally harmful—especially for young users. These chatbots are not real people, but they can be designed to act like romantic or sexual partners, which may encourage unhealthy ideas about relationships, consent, and intimacy. It's important to remember that AI chatbots are tools, not friends or partners, and using them for sexual activity can lead to emotional confusion, exposure to inappropriate content, and even exploitation. Some online sub-cultures, like incels (involuntary celibates), promote harmful ideas about gender and relationships, blaming women for personal problems and encouraging anger or hate. It's important to talk to trusted adults and stay critical of online spaces that make you feel bad about yourself or others. • Sextortion is a form of online blackmail where someone threatens to share sexual images unless you send more pictures, money, or do something against your will. It often starts with someone pretending to be friendly or romantic, then turning manipulative once they have images or personal info. If this happens, it's not your fault—get help immediately from a trusted adult, the police or report it through services like Childline or Report Remove. • Managing pressure around sexual activity means knowing your boundaries and feeling confident to say no if something doesn't feel right. You should never feel rushed, guilty, or forced into anything—healthy relationships are built on respect, trust, and mutual consent. If you're feeling unsure or pressured, talk to a trusted adult or friend who can support you in making safe, respectful choices.
<p>Sex Education Contraception, pregnancy, miscarriage, fertility 27th Mar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contraception is a way to prevent pregnancy during sexual activity. It works by stopping sperm from reaching an egg, preventing the release of an egg, or making it harder for a fertilised egg to grow. There are many types, including condoms, the pill, implants, and natural methods like tracking your cycle—each with different levels of effectiveness and suitability depending on your health and lifestyle. • If someone becomes pregnant, they have three main choices: Continue the pregnancy and become a parent, Choose adoption, Have an abortion (a legal and safe medical procedure in the UK). Pregnancy health includes eating well, avoiding alcohol and smoking, taking folic acid, and attending regular check-ups to keep both the parent and baby safe. • Miscarriage is the loss of a pregnancy before 24 weeks and can be emotionally and physically difficult. Support is available from organisations like the Miscarriage Association, Sands, and Tommy's, which offer helplines, counselling, and peer support. It's important to talk to someone and know that you're not alone. • Fertility challenges mean having difficulty getting pregnant, which can affect both men and women. Causes include medical conditions, lifestyle factors, or age, and support is available through organisations like Fertility Network UK and The Fertility Foundation. Young people can also learn about fertility preservation if they face health treatments that might affect their future chances of having children.

Year 11 Relationships and Sex Education

Week	I will need to know:
<p>Toxic relationships, myths in marriage and consent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs include controlling behaviour, lack of respect, jealousy, manipulation, and ignoring boundaries. You might feel anxious, isolated, or scared to speak up. Healthy relationships are built on trust, equality, and mutual respect—if something feels wrong, it's important to talk to someone you trust. • Marriage is a legal contract that gives couples rights and protections—like inheritance, pensions, and next-of-kin status. Common-law marriage is a myth: living together or having children does not give you the same legal rights as being married. Religious ceremonies that aren't legally registered also don't offer legal protection unless followed by a civil registration. • Consent means agreeing to something freely, confidently, and without pressure. Think of it like ordering a meal—you wouldn't want someone to choose for you or force you to eat something you didn't want. And just like a meal isn't complete without fries, consent isn't complete unless it's: Freely given – no pressure, no manipulation. Reversible – you can change your mind at any time. Informed – you know what you're agreeing to. Enthusiastic – you <i>want</i> to say yes. Specific – saying yes to one thing doesn't mean yes to everything.
<p>Managing break-ups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break-ups and rejection can be difficult, but it's important to give yourself time to heal and talk to trusted friends or adults. Avoid over-contacting the other person, and always respect their space—especially if they've asked for no contact. Use healthy coping strategies like exercise, mindfulness, and journaling, and try to avoid unhealthy habits like isolation, substance use, or self-blame.
<p>Coercion and sexting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment includes unwanted comments, touching, gestures, or messages of a sexual nature. Obsessive behaviour might involve constant messaging, following, or refusing to respect boundaries. If you feel safe, tell the person to stop clearly and firmly. You can also report it to a trusted adult, teacher, safeguarding lead, or anonymously through services like Crimestoppers. • You have the right to feel safe and respected. If someone ignores your "no," pressures you, or makes you feel uncomfortable, that's not okay—and it's important to take action.
<p>Sex Education: Sexual harassment, sexual violence, health misinformation 19th Dec</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that makes someone feel uncomfortable, intimidated, or violated—like inappropriate comments, touching, or messages. Sexual violence includes any sexual act done without consent, such as sexual assault or rape, and is a serious crime. Both can happen in person or online, and it's important to report it and seek support if it happens to you or someone you know. • Strangulation and suffocation are serious forms of physical assault where someone restricts another person's ability to breathe, often by applying pressure to the neck or covering the mouth and nose. These acts are extremely dangerous and can cause brain injury or death, even without leaving visible marks. In the UK, they are now recognised as specific criminal offences under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. • To overcome misinformation, always check facts using trusted sources like the NHS, Brook, or Childline, and avoid relying on social media or influencers for medical advice. Talk to a healthcare professional or teacher if you're unsure about something you've heard. Learning to spot myths and false claims helps you make safe, informed decisions about your health and relationships.
<p>Sex Education Harmful behaviours, healthy relationships and contraception 27th Mar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmful sexual behaviours include any sexual actions that are inappropriate, non-consensual, or make someone feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or violated. These can happen in person or online and include things like unwanted touching, sexual comments, or sharing explicit images. If you experience or witness this, report it to a trusted adult, teacher, or use services like Childline or Report Remove. • Healthy relationships involve respect, communication, and understanding each other's boundaries. Looking after your emotional health means practising self-care, speaking with trusted friends or adults, and avoiding pressure or unhealthy behaviours. If you need support, you can talk to a school counsellor, GP, or use services like Brook or Kooth. • Contraception includes methods like condoms, the pill, implants, and natural cycle tracking, which help prevent pregnancy and reduce the risk of STIs. Some methods work by stopping ovulation, while others block sperm from reaching the egg. Choosing the right contraception depends on your health, lifestyle, and whether you want protection from both pregnancy and infections.